Abstract Descriptions

Designing neighbourhoods with an activity-based approach

Primary Presenter
Seyedehsomayeh TaheriMoosavi, BSc, MSc, Eng., RTPI
University of Manchester
Manchester, United Kingdom

Abstract text: This research lies in the field of place making by looking at the continuous mutual interaction between local communities and their environment. By intervention in the built environment, designers and planners influence patterns of human activity and, thus, of social life. I am currently investigating the approach of activity proximity in neighbourhood design. My research particularly looks at activity modelling of weakly social activities within neighbourhood to develop the analytical and decision-support roles of modelling in the urban design process. The central hypothesis for this research is that if the design process employs local activities of communities in investigating urban environments, through creating and maintaining interpersonal relationships, the circumstances of shared neighbouring life is sustained by participation in activities of neighbourliness. The activity approach in general began from the research on human behaviour and then it was particularly found in modelling travel behaviour. It is about two decades that the main argument in activity modelling is activities from which travel derives are not causally independent themselves. Hence, it is about the recognition of activities as derives which are motivated by a complicated social milieu that links them to other activities, to other people, and to the features of the built environment. This aspect has been argued in agent-based modelling. Agent-based modelling has been extensively used in urban planning, land-use planning and transportation studies.

By introducing activity modelling to the field of urban design, and implementing agent-based modelling on an ongoing regeneration project in Brunswick neighbourhood, Manchester, it is expected that the final results help local institutions and decision makers in the provision of services and facilities for the community. Following the critical review of the concept of activity in place-making and urban modelling, current approaches to activity in policy documents and from the urban designers’ point of view dealing with UK neighbourhoods are assessed. Daily activities of residents then are investigated by filling diaries. The diaries contribute to an analytical activity-based model (an agent-based model) improving multidisciplinary and collaborative urban design process that employs analytical, communication, and dynamic visualisation techniques by integrating with GIS. Finally, the definition and principles of activity proximity approach for urban design purposes are drawn.
GIS Strategic Planning: Best and Fast Practices

Primary Presenter
Rebecca Somers, GISP
Somers-St.Claire GIS Management Consultants
Fairfax, VA

Abstract text: GIS strategic planning can be daunting. It can imply a large project, a lot of time and effort, special funding, formal procedures, large meetings, and tedious documentation. Although strategic planning can be a large effort in some cases, in many it need not be so. Most organizations have limited resources to devote to strategic planning and already have very useful strategic ideas. They just need to be able to apply and develop these ideas without a lot of overhead.

There are many strategic planning tools that can be applied effectively with limited time and effort. Effective use of these tools, however, depends on determining what methods exist and can be useful, the GIS program or project status, the goals and needs, and the effective application of the methods. This presentation will review these simpler strategic planning tools, analyze the types of situations to which they best apply, describe how they can be used effectively, and explain how they can be integrated into larger plans. It will extract these methods from Strategic Planning and GIS Strategic Planning best practices. Examples will demonstrate situations in a variety of public, private, large, and small organizations.